Resources

Writing Reports and Conducting Briefings
(chapter 7 in the Schuh book)
Poster Template (on SA^3 website)
Overview of Today’s Session

• Using results
• Communicating results
• Creating your poster for the SA³ Open House in April (April 23, Alumni Center, 3:00 – 4:30)

Baseball update

Odds to win 2015 World Series:
• Twins: 100:1
• Phillies 300:1
• Nationals 6:1

“the competitive advantage didn’t come from a novel theory of the game; it came from being able to act on it”
Institutions should “…spend more time and money on using data than on gathering it” (Banta and Blaich, 2011, p. 26)

Primary Ways to Use Assessment Results

- Answer your assessment question and address your project’s purpose
- Make an Improvement (and plan for follow-up assessment)
- Improve the assessment process or determine if a different assessment project is needed

Answer your assessment question

- Way back in module 1 we started by spending significant amounts of time developing an assessment question
- Now, hopefully, you can benefit from that investment of time!
- “What factors contribute to the academic success of Presidential Scholars?”
“What factors contribute…”

For example…

• Based on our data mining we found Presidential Scholars who lived on campus had higher first-term GPAs than those who lived off campus
• In our focus groups with Presidential Scholars, they told us that they made use of the study rooms in the Residence Halls and formed study groups

Make an Improvement

• Answering our well-designed question pointed directly to an improvement:
  – Increase opportunities for Presidential Scholars, particularly those living off-campus, to participate in informal study groups

Make an Improvement: Team

• Making improvements usually requires a team effort (which is why we are working in teams)
• However, your team may need to add some new collaborators to get things moving – consider both horizontal (persons in related positions in other offices) and vertical (leadership support)
Make an Improvement: Modifications and Timeline

- Propose modifications or new programs to be made available
- Remember to develop a timeline

Plan to assess the improvement

As Fulcher, Good, Coleman, and Smith (2014) point out, until you assess it again it's just a "change" and not an "improvement"
How Often do Your Assessment Reports Look Like This?

Would that kind of report be read and understood by someone who is more accustomed to seeing:

For this, you die in your sleep.
Not to suggest that we or our students are not smart enough to understand a full assessment report…

But the traditional, written assessment reports are usually intended for two audiences:
- Accreditors
- Internal audiences

Why would we expect them to be of any value to students, parents, the governing board, or the general public?
### Start by Identifying Your Audiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accreditors and Institutional Administrators</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Institution faculty / staff (non-assessment leaders)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents and prospective students</td>
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<tr>
<td>General public</td>
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### Develop the Key Message for Each Audience

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Key Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accreditors and Institutional Administrators</td>
<td>&quot;High expectations, gathering evidence those expectations are met, and using evidence to improve&quot;</td>
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<td>Institution faculty / staff (non-assessment leaders)</td>
<td>&quot;Your partner in supporting student learning and the student experience&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Student focused institution supporting the future of the state and region&quot;</td>
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### Determine How that Message Will be Shared

<table>
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<th>Audience</th>
<th>Key Message</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accreditors and Institutional Administrators</td>
<td>&quot;High expectations, gathering evidence those expectations are met, and using evidence to improve&quot;</td>
<td>Traditional written reports ● Annual written summary ● Assessment website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution faculty / staff (non-assessment leaders)</td>
<td>&quot;Your partner in supporting student learning and the student experience&quot;</td>
<td>Assessment website ● Peer-to-peer (through assessment committee) ● Internal listserv messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>&quot;Committed to improving student learning and the student experience&quot;</td>
<td>Assessment website ● Twitter ● Posters / table tents ● Infographics</td>
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Creating an Infographic

- Stand-alone software (Adobe Illustrator, Microsoft Publisher, etc.)
  - Warning, some may come and go
- Tableau

Summary of Social Media

- Not all students are highly engaged in social media
- Those that are may not be that interested in engaging with you!
- Takes time and is most valuable when you connect with students and others — meet them where they are
- Need to have a message or something interesting you are trying to convey
Final Tips: Intentionality

• Clear communication does not happen accidentally
• Are you just hoping someone will “surf by” your website?
• Take control of what message you want to convey

Final Tips: Multiple Forms of Communication

• Some people don’t read any emails
  – But some do!
• Some people are active in social media and others are not
• Some people will read your posters (and perhaps others cannot read at all!)

Final Tips: Be Engaging and Creative

• Have students help you design and create the posters, infographics, or even help you manage your Twitter account
• Find ways to evaluate what is working and what is not (e.g., hits to your website, RTs, Likes, response from focus groups, etc.)
  – Then ditch what isn’t working!
Ethics of Reporting

- Follow through on all promised or assumed anonymity by making sure results are disaggregated carefully
- Avoid calling-out an individual person by anonymizing written comments
- Be accurate and fair

Creating a poster for the SA³ Open House

- Template on Assessment website (but feel free to use your own or adjust as desired)
- Graphic Services asks for high-quality PDF file for printing
- Recommend 36x48
- Cost of printing at NDSU Graphic Services covered by Office of Vice President of Student Affairs (contact Jeremy for correct purchasing instructions)
- Images and graphs encouraged!
Rubric and Checklist

- Please send me a draft of your poster prior to printing
- Will ask participants to provide scores on each others' posters at the open house using the rubric
- Checklist may also be helpful in developing your posters